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Characterisation of the drama Mrichchhakatikam

Soma Bandyopadhyay

In characterisation point of view Sudraka is the first dramatist who collected his dramatic character from every corner of the society. The dramatist created many characters in his drama Mrichchhakatikam. Those characters were divided into two categories: (a) Major characters and (b) Minor characters. Major characters were directly related to the main plot and they helped to progress the drama smoothly. On the other hand, the minor characters developed the drama; and they also charmed the readers and audience. In this drama we see that the hero and the sophisticated characters spoke in classical language, while heroine, females and other minor characters spoke in the different prakrit dialects.

Charudatta

In Mrichchhakatikam Sudraka selected his hero named Charudatta. He was a young brahmana and he lived in 'Ujjayini', 'Ujjayini' was the famous place in ancient India. At that time many rich persons (vanika) lived in Ujjayini. Charudatta's ancestors were very richmen, but unfortunately those wealth disappeared at the time of Charudatta. Now Charudatta is a poor man, but he is home and famous for his greatness and kindness. His name is most meaningful², with his moral character. Charudatta 'he who gives noble'. He spent his money for public welfare³ and for himself too. Bountifulness is a bahitwhis become a second mature with him, so that, when he has nothing valuable to give away, he parts with the very cloak he happens to be wearing. Charudatta is an honourable man. His high sense of honour makes him to replace the stolen ornaments by a costly necklace. For such nobleness he could able to win the heart of a beautiful, rich and young courtesan.

In Mrichchhakatika's First Act we can see that now Charudatta is a poor man and he laments over his lengthy great poverty⁵. According to some critics, Charu's lamentation over his poverty in the first act is very unbecoming for a great man like him. In support of their statement they point out that Charu's desires for his present condition, not because he is there by deprived of the opportunities of doing good to others. He is very sincere for his